

July 22, 1944

Dear Luria:

I have your letter about Bodenstein and have given the points you raised further thought. I presume you received my letter of June 16, in which I told you of how matters stood in our department with reference to the possibility of a place for Bodenstein. There is no change in conditions since then and I think there is practically no chance at all that anyone will be taken on the staff at this time.

I fully sympathize with Bodenstein's present predicament and wish something constructive could be done at once, for I believe he would be a real catch for any zoology department. As I wrote you before, I have already suggested him to Dean Payne and have recommended him strongly. As to bringing outside pressure to bear, I am dubious as to whether the effect will be favorable or otherwise. On the whole I can see no harm in having letters sent to Payne by Dunn or someone else (but not more than one person), if the letter made absolutely no mention of knowledge of an opening here, but were completely objective, merely stating Bodenstein's present predicament, his qualifications, and the point you made about the possibility of being harder to get good men later than now. If the letter were written to Payne in such a way as to give the impression that he was not being picked out alone for this, but that probably similar letters were being sent elsewhere, I can see no cause for uneasiness; if, however, he got the impression that pressure were being directed specifically on him, I think he would react against the proposition strongly and immediately. As this is the impression he would undoubtedly get if more than one person wrote him, I strongly favor limiting the letter to one outsider.

I must say, however, that I am strongly of the opinion that there is no chance to take Bodenstein on here at present. The department does not need another man now or in the immediate future. Moreover, I believe that the next man to be brought into the department will be brought in to succeed Payne as head, and of course Bodenstein would not be considered for that post. This is of course only my personal opinion of the way things are lining up and I would not want it spread abroad.

Yes, I knew you got your promotion and I was of course delighted to hear about it. Congratulations! And I hope the trend continues in the same direction rapidly.

The group at Cold Spring sounds most interesting. I'd like very much to visit there for a few days. I may do so towards the latter part of August. I shall probably have to be in New York or Woods Hole for a few days to make negotiations for a micromanipulator. I am planning to send Ruth Dippell to work in Chambers laboratory for a week or two to learn the technique. I shall be in Baltimore and Philadelphia mainly for the last two weeks of August. Best regards to you and my other friends at Cold Spring,

Yours,

Sonneborn mss. II
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